

Please amend the claims according to the following listing:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of preparing an abutment system, ~~including an abutment having a base portion, for placement on a dental implant~~, comprising the steps of:
 - a. forming a curable hybrid ceramic material into a shoulder about ~~the~~ ~~a~~ base portion of ~~the~~ ~~an~~ abutment, ~~the abutment being an abutment configured for placement on a dental implant that has been implanted into a jawbone and configured to be removably affixed to the dental implant~~;
 - b. partially curing the hybrid ceramic material so as to form an initially cured shoulder;
 - c. after partially curing the hybrid ceramic material, shaping the initially cured shoulder to a desired shape so that the shoulder conforms to at least one patient specific criterion; and
 - d. completely curing the shoulder.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of applying an opaque material to the abutment prior to forming the curable hybrid ceramic material into a shoulder about the base portion of the abutment.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of shaping the initially cured shoulder to a desired shape so that the shoulder conforms to at least one patient specific criterion is performed by adding additional hybrid ceramic material to the initially cured shoulder.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of shaping the initially cured shoulder to a desired shape so that the shoulder conforms to at least one patient specific criterion is performed by removing an amount of hybrid ceramic material from the initially cured shoulder.
5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of shaping the initially cured shoulder to a desired shape so that the shoulder conforms to at least one patient specific criterion is performed by ~~alternatively~~ adding and removing hybrid ceramic material from the initially cured shoulder.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises at least 85% porcelain.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the hybrid ceramic material comprises 92% porcelain.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the hybrid ceramic material further comprises a pigment.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the partially curing step comprises subjecting the hybrid ceramic material to ultraviolet light.
10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the completely curing step comprises subjecting the shoulder to heat.
11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the shoulder is subjected to a temperature

Application No. 10/689,179
Amendment dated September 11, 2006
Reply to Office action of 05/31/2006
Page 4 of 9

between about 100 degrees Celsius and about 110 degrees Celsius.

12. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of polishing the shoulder.

13-24. (Cancelled)